action had yet been taken by the Government in the matter. He pointed out that the absence of a uniform system of marriage and inheritance among the Ezhavas of the State had very deleterious effects on the peaceful progress of the community as a whole. Three systems of inheritance obtained in the community at present. A few who formed the minority followed the *Makkathayam* system of inheritance; others followed the *Marumakkathayam* system and a third set followed a system of inheritance which partook of the nature of both *Makkathayam* and *Marumakkathayam*. The Member's representations related to the *Marumakkathayees* alone. Amongst them, the marriage tie was considered sufficiently sacred and strong; but the condition of absolute 'rightlessness' of an Ezhava wife in regard to the self-acquisition of an Ezhava husband was deplorable. The Member said that the community felt the injustice and iniquity of the system and referred to the wholesome effect of the Nair Regulation on the Nair community. He therefore requested that, so far as the *Marumakkathayees* were concerned, a system of inheritance similar to that already followed by a section of the Ezhavas, *viz.*, the combination of both the *Marumakkathayam* and *Makkathayam* systems, might be introduced by a legislative enactment, or that a competent Committee be appointed to enquire into the matter with a view to the introduction of the above enactment, or that the Nair Regulation itself might be made applicable to the *Marumakkathayee* Ezhavas with such modifications as the needs and conditions of that community might require.

Dewan.—Will the community be satisfied with a law on the lines of the Nair Regulation?

Member.—It will, I think, satisfy the majority, though there may be some differences of opinion on the part of a small minority.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

25. Tea thefts.

Mr. Mackenzie (Member, Central Travancore Planters' Association) said that the theft of tea from the Peermade District had assumed most serious proportions during the past four years and that the planters felt bound to ask Government for help and the better protection of that produce. Tea was at first stolen from chests at the Kottayam landing and from carts in transit; but latterly factories had been broken into and either loose tea or packed cases were removed. The latest trouble was that cartmen accepted delivery of tea chests under an assumed name and never delivered them to the proper agents at Kottayam. He complained that the local police took little or no interest in the cases reported to them and that, out of the many cases reported, only three or four had ended in conviction. He pointed out that tea was not sold locally at all from the estates and that, therefore, the contention of the police that the tea often sold in the local markets was the tea sold to the local merchants by the planters was absolutely untenable. He believed that the police could do much more than they did to stop the thefts by keeping a stricter watch on the local trade in tea. During the past four years, the planters had lost about 1,00,000 lbs. of tea valued at about Rs. 50,000. He suggested that the Government should pass some Regulation, such as the one which referred to the illicit sale of arrack, whereby the burden of proof should rest with the retail merchants of tea and that a smart Commissioner be deputed to enquire into and report on the theft and reselling of tea in Peermade.

Dewan's reply.—If the figures given by you are correct, you have a legitimate grievance. But there appears to be no law either in British India or Ceylon dealing specially with tea thefts, in the same way as coffee thefts or rubber thefts, to serve as a model or basis. The matter will, however, be enquired into. A report will also be called for from the Commissioner of Police about the apathy of the police complained of.

26. Agricultural Loans Regulation—the defects in its workability and suggestions for remedying the same.

Mr. G. Sankaranarayana Iyer (Member, T. I. C., Shencotta) said that, as he understood that the Additional Head Sirkar Vakil was soon to take up the question of the amendments required in the Agricultural Loans Regulation

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